

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning Committee

7 March 2012

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Operational Services)/
Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

S/0069/12/FL - COMBERTON
Extension and Addition of Security Roller Shutters - Comberton Post Office,
12, Barton Road, Comberton
for Mr & Mrs Patel

Recommendation: Delegated Approval/Refusal

Date for Determination: 20 March 2012

This application has been reported to the Planning Committee for determination as a recommendation of approval would conflict with the recommendation of the Parish Council

Site and Proposal

1. The application site is located within the designated Comberton village framework, and also within the Comberton Conservation Area. The adjacent buildings at Cross Farm and Hawks' Farm are both grade II listed. The application comprises a two-storey property attached to a flat roof shop. The frontage to each element is divided by a low post and rail fence. To the front of the shop is a parking area, set beyond a low wall. The site is on higher ground than the road and is therefore relatively prominent in the street scene.
2. The application, received on 24th January 2012, seeks an extension to the shop, and the addition of roller shutters to the frontage windows. The extension will infill the existing shop entrance, and introduce a new forward flat roof element to the front and side. The application is accompanied by a Design and Access Statement and a Heritage Statement.

Planning History

3. Planning application **S/2229/05/F** granted consent for the extension and modification of the parking area and the installation of gates.
4. Application **S/1775/04/F** for extensions to the dwelling and shop, vehicular access and fences was withdrawn.
5. There have been a number of other planning applications at the site. However, these are not considered to be relevant to the determination of this application.

Policies

6. **Local Development Framework Development Control Policies DPD (LDF DCP)** adopted July 2007: **DP/1** Sustainable Development, **DP/2** Design of

New Development, **SF/4** Retailing in Villages, **DP/3** Development Criteria, **CH/3** Listed Buildings, **CH/4** Development Within the Curtilage or Setting of a Listed Building, **CH/5** Conservation Areas, **CH/6** Protected Village Amenity Areas and **TR/2** Car and Cycle Parking Standards.

7. **District Design Guide SPD** adopted March 2010, **Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD** adopted January 2009, and **Listed Buildings SPD** adopted July 2009.
8. **Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions:** Advises that conditions should be necessary, relevant to planning, relevant to the development permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

Consultations

9. **Comberton Parish Council** recommends refusal of the original submitted plans. The design is not considered to be of conservation standard and would remove valuable parking on an already congested site. Delivery lorries would have more difficulty accessing the site. A locked gate to the car park is considered more preferable than roller shutters.
10. The Council's **Conservation Officer**, when commenting on the originally submitted plans, notes security shutters are usually resisted and the proven threat needs to be demonstrated. They should be located on the inside of the glass, and insufficient justification has been provided.
11. The **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** notes rural stores are subject to attack mainly for cigarettes and alcohol. In the past two years, four recorded crimes took place at the post office (1 x damage, 1 x vehicle crime, 1 x theft and 1 x other), and none of these would cause a concern or affect this application. No comment or objection is made.

Representations

12. None were received at the time of writing. Members should be aware the site notice expires on the 28th February and the press notice expires on 6th March 2012. A further 14 day consultation to neighbouring properties will also take place with the amended plans received on 16th February 2012.

Planning Comments

13. The key issues for the determination of this application are the principle of development, the impact upon the heritage assets, the impact upon the amenity of the occupier of the adjacent dwelling, impact upon the Protected Village Amenity Area, and parking provision.

The Principle of Development

14. Policy SF/4 of the LDF DCP 2007 relates specifically to retailing in villages. It states proposals for extensions of village shops within village frameworks will only be permitted where the size and attraction of the shopping development is of a scale appropriate to the function and size of the village. The policy acknowledges that shops play a vital role in achieving sustainability in villages

and provide an important community function. The proposal creates an additional floor space of approximately 42 square metres. Given this relatively small increase, the extension is considered to be appropriate in relation to the existing shop.

Impact upon the Heritage Assets

15. The site has the potential to impact upon two heritage assets, those being the setting of the Comberton Conservation Area and the setting of the adjacent Listed Buildings. With regard to the originally submitted plans, the Conservation Officer notes concerns regarding the position of the proposed roller shutters to the exterior of the building. The amended plans received on 16th February 2012 show the window shutters to be moved to within the building behind the glass windows. However, due to the practicalities of installation, the shutters to the door would remain on the outside. Members will be updated on comments received from the Conservation Officer with regard the amendments. Certainly the shutters moving behind the glass would be a significant improvement. The applicant has stated that the colour finish of the shutter is to be agreed, and if supported, a condition can ensure this detailing is satisfactory.
16. There are no objections to the design of the extension. Whilst it would increase the amount of flat roof development at the site, it would tidy up an area to the west of the building which has an untidy lean-to and external storage area. It is noted an element of the lean-to would remain, but it would be at a reduced scale. The design therefore is considered to preserve the setting of the Conservation Area.

Impact upon the Amenity of the Occupiers of the Neighbouring Dwelling

17. The side extension to the shop would bring the built form close to the shared boundary with 8 Barton Road. There is currently a lean-to canopy in this area, which would need to be removed to allow for the extension. The flat roof of the extension would measure 3.1m in height. Whilst it is taller than the lean-to, it would not cause a significantly larger impact. The proposal is not therefore considered to significantly harm the amenity of the occupier of the adjacent property.

Impact upon the Protected Village Amenity Area

18. The site is included within a Protected Village Amenity Area (PVAA) that covers a large area of the village between Barton Road and Swaynes Lane to the south. Policy CH/6 of the LDF DCP 2007 states development will not be permitted within PVAA's if it would have an adverse impact upon the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village. Given the relatively small nature of the proposal, it is not considered to harm the aims of the PVAA, and the development would not harm the setting of this designation.

Parking Provision

19. The area to the front of the shop is laid out as per the approved layout of planning application S/2229/05/F, and provides 11 parking spaces. The dwelling now has its own access, and therefore parking at the site is for the shop only. The development should not lose any parking spaces, although the space next to the shop is likely to become very tight and potentially may

not be practical. The Council's maximum parking standards seeks 1 parking space per 14 square metres of shop. With the extension, the shop would require 16 parking spaces. There is therefore a shortfall on site. However, given the location of the shop within the heart of the village, such a shortfall is considered acceptable in this instance. The majority of trade is unlikely to require a long stay in the car park, and the shop is easily accessible for local people by foot.

20. The comments from the Parish Council are noted. Whilst there would be some extension forwards, there remains adequate space for delivery vehicles to turn and manoeuvre to ensure they can leave the site in forward gear. This situation should not change from the existing layout.

Summary

21. The application has been amended given concerns regarding the roller shutters being on the exterior of the building. Moving the window shutters behind the glass will significantly reduce the impact. However, the shutter to the door will remain on the exterior. The application is considered acceptable in all other matters, and Members will be updated in relation to comments received regarding the amended plan.

Recommendation

22. Delegated approval/refusal, subject to comments received following consultation of the amended plans received on 16th February 2012. If approved, the application would require conditions regarding a time limit for implementation, confirmation of plan numbers, confirmation the extension would have the same finish as the existing, and details of the finish of the shutters.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- **Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.**
- **District Design Guide SPD** adopted March 2010, **Development Affecting Conservation Areas SPD** adopted January 2009, and **Listed Buildings SPD** adopted July 2009.
- **Circular 11/95 – The Use of Conditions in Planning Permissions.**
- **Planning File ref: S/0069/12/FL, S/2229/05/F and S/1775/04/F.**

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